

Ranch Fire Emergency Stabilization Draft Plan Issues

I've review the summary and specifications which was somewhat difficult without any burned area assessments. All the specifications lack much detail (i.e., not much who, what, where, when or how - just the how much).

The following minor facility specifications are Burned Area Rehabilitation treatments. *The emergency stabilization of improvements and minor facilities (e.g., signs, guardrails, pit toilets, etc.) burned or damaged by wildfire is appropriate only for public health and safety. Protective fencing is allowed using emergency stabilization funding to protect installed treatments and for the health and safety of agency personnel and the public..* (Interagency BAER Guidebook 4.2.6). The below facilities may be mission critical but they are not protecting installed treatments nor needed to protect the health or safety of the public or agency personnel.

- Protective Fence - which the specification acknowledges as a replacement of the burned boundary fence (possibly damaged or destroyed by the 2003 fire). If it was damaged or destroyed by the 2003 wildfire it isn't eligible for ES or BAR funding.
- Replace Burnt Boundary & Area Closed Signs (replace with BAR funding in 2003)
- Replace Electric Protective Fencing (replace with BAR funding in 2003)
- Replace/Repair Gates (replaced with BAE funding in 2003)

Replacing the Fire Hydrants & Hose Stations and Radio Repeater Station (funded with BAR funds in 2003) is allowable because of their public/employee safety importance. It seems that a lesson learned after 2 fires in 4 years is that these facilities need better preparedness planning and protection.

The Road Maintenance & Culvert Cleaning specification appears to have been developed from lessons learned after the 2003 fire when there was no erosion control of road slopes. By implementing erosion control of road slopes, there shouldn't be any need for road maintenance or it should be significantly reduced, or are the wattles so ineffective that their erosion control value isn't worth the \$63K cost?

A recent Interagency BAER plan review identified that FWS programmatic costs are the highest among the four bureaus. The following table identifies programmatic costs in this plan. Check to see that they are reasonable and appropriate.